

Mr. LOCKHART: And veterans who are building houses of their own.

Mr. FLEMING: I am coming to that. We are told this afternoon by the minister—and I made as full a note as I could when he was speaking—that Wartime Housing Limited orders for specific projects, and that it has not quantities of materials on hand. That is an amazing statement. The fact of the matter is that Wartime Housing Limited has been requisitioning far in advance of its immediate requirements. Let us not be misled by expressions such as "ordering for specific projects." If they are ordering for specific projects, then they are ordering far in advance of their immediate needs with respect to those projects.

I will give an example. We were told that there are no quantities of 2½ inch nails under requisition to-day.

Mr. HOWE: None in storage.

Mr. FLEMING: A reputable builder in Toronto telephoned me ten days ago. He was almost in a state of distraction, and he said to me, "Mr. Fleming, you cannot buy a 2½ inch nail in the city of Toronto to-day. I have taken contracts for a hundred houses, many of which are for veterans, and I cannot get a 2½ inch nail in this city." He told me that the reason for that condition was that Wartime Housing Limited had requisitioned 50,000 kegs of 2½ inch nails. Not only that, but he said that there are in storage in a building on Vaughan road, Toronto, 2,000 kegs of 2½ inch nails.

Mr. HOWE: Will the hon. member do me a favour? Will he find out to whom they belong?

Mr. FLEMING: Wartime Housing Limited.

Mr. HOWE: No. I spoke to the manager of Wartime Housing Limited, and he said that his work is being held up for lack of 2½ inch nails. I think my hon. friend will find that they do not belong to Wartime Housing Limited.

Mr. FLEMING: I put it to the minister in this way. My information, which comes from a source I can fully trust, is that they were there under requisition of Wartime Housing Limited.

Mr. HOWE: Not true.

Mr. FLEMING: Well, I hope the minister makes that statement after inquiry.

Mr. HOWE: I shall disclose my source of information, if the hon. member will do the same. I got my information from the manager of the construction department of Wartime Housing Limited, and that information was received by telephone only about three or

four hours ago. When my hon. friend gives the source of his information, perhaps we can make a check.

Mr. FLEMING: There will be an opportunity to do that. This information comes to me from a man who is fully informed on these matters.

An hon. MEMBER: Who is the man?

Mr. FLEMING: The hon. member for Rosedale suggests that perhaps the controller of 2½ inch nails is involved in this.

The methods pursued by Wartime Housing Limited in connection with the requisitioning of supplies in advance of immediate needs has been the principal factor in the creation of the condition which exists to-day with regard to the production of building materials. It is just because of the high-handed methods pursued by Wartime Housing Limited that the normal supply and the normal methods of meeting the needs have been disorganized. If the Minister of Munitions and Supply would in this respect follow the example set in the administration of the Veterans' Land Act, I suggest that he would find in that a useful lesson.

No doubt much will be said about the fact that these houses are built for the housing of veterans. Let us have it clearly understood that we are all agreed—

Mr. MACKENZIE: May I inform the hon. member that I am afraid the nails in question belong to the Veterans' Land Act administration. So that story is nailed.

Mr. FLEMING: I am glad to have the government's responsibility nailed to the mast, at last.

In the vicinity of Toronto 600 houses are being built at the present time under the Veterans' Land Act administration. I suggest, with respect to the Minister of Veterans Affairs that that administration does not need anything like 2,000 kegs of nails for its immediate projects.

Mr. MACKENZIE: I shall have the matter looked into right away.

Mr. FLEMING: Thank you very much. If those nails can be made available for the construction of houses in Toronto at the present time, where they are badly needed, a worthy service will be done.

I was dealing with the matter of providing houses for veterans. All are agreed that veterans must have priority at the present time. But let us not be led by that fact into thinking that on all occasions we are helping the veterans when we let Wartime Housing Limited ride roughshod over all others. Many